



# Rebuilding Afghanistan

Special Edition

United States Agency for International Development

## SPECIAL EDITION: REBUILDING AGRICULTURAL MARKETS PROGRAM (RAMP)



### RAMP DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Agriculture is Afghanistan's principle source of jobs and income. It provides over 51% of the GDP and employs over 80% of the labor force. Thus, in the summer of 2003, USAID initiated a three-year Rebuilding Agricultural Markets Program (RAMP) aimed at enhancing the food security and incomes of Afghanistan's war ravaged and drought stricken rural population. The program is concentrated in thirteen priority provinces (Kabul, Kapisa, Parwan, Wardak, Logar, Ghazni, Paktia, Nangarhar, Laghman, Baghlan, Kunduz, Helmand and Kandahar), and has two principal objectives: to increase agricultural productivity and output, and to facilitate effective networks between producers, processors and markets. The following activities help the program meet its objectives:

- Expanding rural finance opportunities
- Improving rural infrastructure
- Generating improved agricultural technology
- Creating facilities to support markets
- Developing the livestock industry

### Accomplishments: Expanding Rural Finance Opportunities

- **Microfinance Loans:** In order to promote local economies and provide farmers with necessary equipment, RAMP implemented—in partnership with the World Bank—a grant of \$5 million to the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development. The ministry uses the grant to implement microfinance programs and loans. These loans range between \$50 and \$5,000, and support small agricultural and women-owned businesses. In order to implement the program, over 1,000 loan officers were trained in processing loan applications. To date, over 2,000 loans have been disbursed.



Latifa's (middle) loan supported the vegetable-raising business that is her family's sole source of income.



Newly trained loan officers complete loan applications paperwork and receive loan funds.

## Accomplishments: Improving Rural Infrastructure—Irrigation Canals and Farm-to-Market Roads

Rehabilitated Roads decrease farm-to-market travel times resulting in less produce spoiled en route. Irrigation projects provide rural communities with more farmable land. And both programs provide thousands of Afghans with jobs and income. To date:

- 2.5 million Afghans benefit from irrigation projects and road construction
- 110 kilometers of rural farm-to-market roads repaired
- 210 irrigation structures and 300 kilometers of canals rehabilitated—improving irrigation on 300,000 hectares of cropland
- 275 Afghans trained in canal maintenance and 40 entities trained in road construction techniques
- Over 230,000 labor days utilized for road construction and irrigation projects—\$2.2 million in wages paid to local labor

### Recent Progress and Highlighted Activities

- **Rehabilitated Irrigation Canals, Kunduz and Baghlan Provinces:** RAMP de-silted and widened over 90 kilometers of irrigation canals, enabling farmers to receive a reliable source of water to irrigate over 35,000 hectares of prime agricultural land. The rehabilitation of these canals includes the repair or replacement of damaged or destroyed structures such as water intakes, canal banks, protection walls and sluice gates.
- **Dams Constructed, Parwan Province:** RAMP constructed three water diversion dams along the Ghorband River (Charikar, Khwaja/Matak, Mahigeer), irrigating approximately 18,000 hectares of land in more than 40 villages.
- **Rehabilitation of Irrigation Canals, Parwan Province:** RAMP is rehabilitating and constructing six new water diversion dams over the Salang and Ghurband Rivers—providing more water to a large proportion of the agricultural land in Parwan province.
- **Dam Rehabilitation and Road Repair, Kunduz Province:** RAMP is repairing twenty-five kilometers of farm-to-market roads that will enable farmers in the region to more effectively sell their produce. Additionally, RAMP is constructing four water intakes that will provide a valuable source of water to over 50,000 hectares of wheat, cotton and rice producing land.
- **Road Rehabilitation, Nangahar and Kunar Provinces:** RAMP is rehabilitating 300 meters of road between agriculturally rich Jalalabad and Asadabad (northeast Afghanistan), and constructing a diversion canal, protection wall and gabion dyke to reduce erosion during periods of flooding.
- **Road Rehabilitation, Balkh Province:** RAMP is rehabilitating 100 kilometers of road that includes repairing culverts, drainages and other road structures. The road construction will improve transportation routes leading to central markets.
- **Road Rehabilitation, Ghazni Province:** To curb flooding, RAMP is rehabilitating 120 kilometers of roads, 30 culverts, 2,500 meters of retaining walls and 205 meters of pipes.



*Local laborers working on the Shomali Plain irrigation project, Parwan.*



*Canal repaired, Parwan province.*



*BEFORE: Nangahar to Kunar road damaged by erosion.*



*AFTER: Nangahar to Kunar road repaired with a protective gabion wall.*

## Accomplishments: Generating Improved Agricultural Technology

On-farm demonstrations illustrate the effectiveness of new crops and improved irrigation and cultivation techniques, and allow farmers and agriculture input dealers to receive training in seed multiplication and fertilizer use, integrated crop management, and post harvest techniques. To date: 5 village-based seed enterprises were established, each producing 100 tons of improved seed; 350 farmers have been trained in virus-free potato seed production; and more than 400 on-farm field demonstrations have been implemented for crops such as wheat, rice, onions, potatoes, peanuts, mung beans, canola and tomatoes.

### Recent Progress and Highlighted Activities

- **Locust Control, Samangan, Baghlan and Kunduz Provinces:** RAMP conducted locust control activities on 90,000 hectares, improving food security for 270,000 families.
- **On-Farm Demonstrations, Helmand and Khandahar Provinces:** RAMP implemented nineteen drip irrigation demonstrations and trained 45 farmers in the technology, reducing time devoted to weeding and fertilizing. In Kandahar, RAMP implemented twenty-one grape trellis demonstrations that increase grape yields over traditional growing methods.
- **Grape Revitalization, Parwan Province:** Over 4,000 grape cuttings, of 22 varieties, were imported from University of California-Davis and planted on the Ministry of Agriculture's research farm to establish a grape foundation nursery.



*On-farm demonstration in Parwan..*



## Accomplishments: Creating Facilities to Support Markets

The program's construction of over 100 market centers provides Afghan farmers with a place for cleaning, sorting, storing and packaging their products. The centers allow buyers and traders to have easier access to farmers and their produce, and are strategically located to support irrigation, road rehabilitation, agricultural production and processing projects.

### Recent Progress and Highlighted Activities

- **Village Collection Centers:** To assist in marketing grapes in Shomali Plains (northeast Afghanistan) and Kandahar (southern Afghanistan), RAMP constructed twenty-five collection centers. The centers enable producers and traders to assemble the grapes in a shaded and cooled environment before they are packed in refrigerated trucks. The centers will also be used during non-grape harvesting times for assembling and trading high value crops, such as vegetables.
- **Wholesale Markets:** RAMP is rehabilitating the fresh fruit and vegetable wholesale marketplace in the city of Jalalabad, Nangarhar province (eastern Afghanistan). Once complete, the new facility will have reinforced concrete in the loading/unloading and entry/exit areas, a proper drainage system, and a cleaner water supply for washing.
- **Village/District Market centers:** RAMP is in the final stages of reconstructing a twelve-stall, brick and mortar, shaded, weekly market intended to facilitate the trading of agricultural and non-agricultural products at the village level. The center is located 20 kilometers from Torkham and within 100 meters of the main road that links Jalalabad to Torkham.



*Village collection center in Parwan province.*



*Wholesale market in Jalalabad nearly completed.*

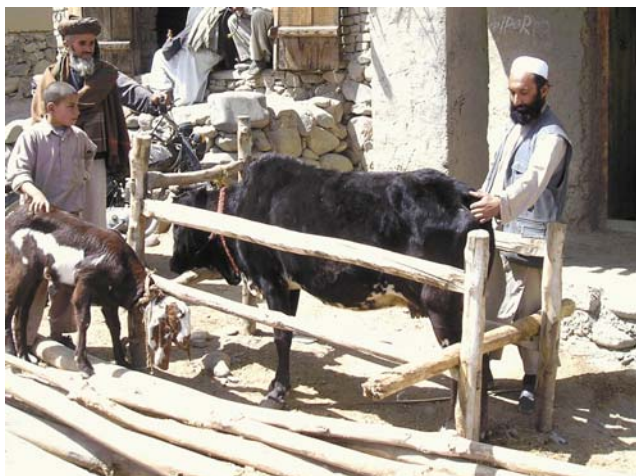
## Accomplishments: Developing the Livestock Industry

Livestock are an important component of Afghanistan's agriculture sector. In addition to being a source of food, many of these animals provide draught labor and high value by-products such as eggs, wool and cashmere. RAMP works with Afghan farmers to earn the greatest economic return from their livestock. The program's implementing partners combine efforts in order to provide needed veterinary services, advice on animal nutrition, disease control, and livestock management. To date:

- 2.3 million animals vaccinated/treated
- over 3.5 million vaccine doses distributed to veterinary field units
- a new disease recording and administration system introduced
- 25,200 chickens vaccinated against Newcastle Disease.

### Recent Progress and Highlighted Activities

- **Village Women's Poultry Production and Market Development:** In Parwan, Ghazni, Nangahar and Kunduz provinces, RAMP introduced practical methods for improving poultry productivity, thereby enabling over 25,000 women to participate in poultry income generating activities (commercialization of eggs and chicken). New markets will be opened in urban centers bringing additional revenue into the participating village. To date, over 500 women have been trained in poultry management, and 6,000 chickens have been distributed to poultry entrepreneurs throughout the country.
- **Livestock Health, Production and Marketing Improvement:** Para-veterinarians received training enabling them to staff and service a national network of private veterinary field units capable of providing livestock health services in all 380 districts of Afghanistan. RAMP is also creating a livestock health, production and marketing database to coordinate with and assist government ministries on such issues as disease surveillance, livestock inventories and trans-border issues.



*Livestock receiving vaccination treatment.*